UNITED
NATIONS

UNDP

United Nations
Development Programme

Distr.
GENERAL

DP/INT/GLO/2/Add.1
15 April 1992

Original: ENGLISH

Thirty-ninth session
4-29 May 1992, Geneva
Item 6 of the provisional agenda

PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

ANALYSIS OF THE GLOBAL AND INTERREGIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR THE FIFTH CYCLE

Report of the Administrator

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted to the Governing Council in response to paragraph 4 of its decision 92/10 of 14 November 1992. The report analyses the ways in which priorities are set for the global and interregional programmes, their relationship to activities funded through Special Programme Resources (SPR) and the comparative advantage of UNDP funding of multi-donor programmes through global and interregional indicative planning figures (IPFs). The report should be read in conjunction with document DP/INT/GLO/2 and Corr.1.

2. The goal of UNDP is human development through the creation of opportunities in which peoples' abilities, talents and creativity can find full expression. UNDP also works across national boundaries, sponsoring programmes that are designed to promote the sharing of experience and to draw international attention to issues of global concern. Within this overall context, the role of the global and interregional programmes is to support the search for solutions to global and interregional problems that may be beyond the existing capacities of individual countries or even regions. These programmes also seek to lessen the burden of hunger and disease and to create opportunities for more productive lives.

GE.92-61325/9479a

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3. The global programme utilizes modern research tools to create improved technologies and systems designed to provide solutions to problems faced in developing countries and to enhance their scientific and technical capacities. Examples of this global research are new drugs and vaccines for diseases and high-yielding crop varieties. Global activities support selected research activities and help to strengthen the capacity of cooperating national institutes to carry out such research.

4. The interregional programme focuses on multiregional technical and management cooperation to enhance the application and utilization of new knowledge, systems and technologies in developing countries. It also emphasizes the importance of capacity-building in and among the cooperating partners.

5. Activities supported by the global and interregional programmes differ distinctly from activities supported through Special Programme Resources (SPR) although in a very few instances they are dealing with the same development sector. SPR-supported activities are relatively small inputs explicitly designed to introduce innovative methods into UNDP country-level activities over a short time-frame. Global and interregional programmes, on the other hand, serve to support long-term research and advisory services with groups of United Nations specialized agencies, developed and developing countries forming partnerships involving common institutional and strategic approaches.

6. Three primary criteria underpin the specific research and development activities to be supported from global and interregional programmes during the fifth cycle.

7. Responsiveness to UNDP priorities:

(a) Do the proposed activities contribute to human development? For example, do the proposed activities place people at the centre of development? Do they have the potential for enlarging peoples' choices, improving the quality of their lives and enhancing their ability to contribute to the development of their communities? Do they enhance the quality of life of the present generation without putting at risk that of future generations? How many lives can be saved? How many people can be fed? What are the lasting human and institutional benefits?

(b) Do they contribute to national capacity-building? For example, do these interventions assist in building the regional, country and intercountry capacities? Do they strengthen managerial, technical, administrative and research capabilities? Are the approaches affordable and sustainable?

(c) Do they contribute to the areas of focus identified by the Governing Council?

8. UNDP's comparative advantage. Are the proposed activities clearly within the comparative advantage of UNDP, and/or uniquely suited to the role of UNDP within the United Nations system and within the international development community?

9. Collaboration and linkages with United Nations system and other organizations. How do the proposed activities provide opportunities for collaboration and linkages within all parts of UNDP, with other United Nations organizations, external support agencies, and developing countries?

II. THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK: UNDP's COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

10. The comparative advantage of UNDP in co-sponsoring and supporting global and interregional activities i.e. in the following four fields.

11. UNDP's neutrality and cross-sectoral responsibilities. UNDP has great flexibility in the types of programmes it can support. It is not constrained by political, regulatory or other considerations that may face some external support agencies in their funding of certain components of a partnership programme. UNDP inputs are dedicated to seeking the highest quality expertise, wherever located, or the most deserving and effective developing country partners, wherever located. The interdisciplinary and multisectoral approach of UNDP with the focus on human development, allows the undertaking of activities that may not be the focus of academic institutions, external support agencies or even the United Nations specialized agencies. It can approach sectoral problems as an unbiased neutral partner because it is not unduly influenced by special sectoral interests.

12. The UNDP concern for overall development regardless of the sector makes it ideally suited to help countries solve problems with implications in more than one sector. The growing human immune deficiency virus (HIV) epidemic, for example, is not only a health problem but clearly has an impact on all aspects of human development. Forestry management and pesticide usage in food production are issues of concern to environmentalists and specialists in energy, agriculture and health alike. UNDP support can promote interdisciplinary responses to key development issues, incorporating research, technology development and institutional capacity-building.

13. UNDP's contribution to capacity-building. UNDP is dedicated to human resource and institutional capacity-building across sectors through strengthening managerial, technical, administrative and research capabilities. This is essential for the effective planning and implementation of problem-solving research efforts and for the management of technologies stemming from these efforts. Examples include the extensive strengthening of capabilities in tropical disease research and in global agricultural research programmes.

14. UNDP's unique worldwide field office network. UNDP Resident Representatives around the world play an interactive and coordinating role that enhances consultation among donors and among different governmental ministries within the country. No other financing institution has such an extensive capacity. This network also helps to ensure that the results of basic and operational research supported by global and interregional activities can be readily accessed by developing countries and applied within the context of national plans and programmes. One of several examples is the $180 million saved annually through integrated pest management based on collaboration with Indonesian scientists, UNDP and the International Rice Research Institute.

15. UNDP's co-sponsorship and management. By playing a management role in the inter-donor partnerships, UNDP can bring its multisectoral development perspective to the policies and programmes to be undertaken and can thereby exert influence over these programmes far larger than its financial contribution alone would suggest. Co-sponsorship gives the global and interregional programmes opportunities to be intimately involved in the overall policies and management of these activities. This role enables UNDP consistently to emphasize the importance of human and institutional development in such partnership arrangements.

16. As both a co-sponsor and financial supporter of global research endeavour, UNDP can help not only to shape the overall partnership thrust but can fund activities with special pertinence to developing countries. This enables UNDP to take a pro-active approach rather than that of a passive contributor to a common pool of funds. Many contributors to multi-donor efforts consider the decision of UNDP to support activities or otherwise to be an incentive for their own support and collaboration. Similarly, UNDP support gives developing countries greater confidence in the overall partnership. Partnership arrangements have long been used for health and agricultural research and water and sanitation. Examples include environmentally sound integrated pest management systems that contribute to human development by enhancing the life of the present generation without putting at risk that of future generations and clean water and sanitation, which contribute to improving the quality of peoples' lives and enhance their ability to contribute in turn to the development of their community. More recent partnerships have been or are being arranged for the HIV epidemic, energy, irrigation and drainage, vaccine development, the reduction of maternal mortality and disability, debt management and urban management.

III. PRIORITIES FOR GLOBAL HEALTH AND FOOD RESEARCH

17. No two aspects of life constrain human development in developing countries more than hunger and disease. This is true especially for people having low incomes. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the appropriate application of the results of science can reduce the destructive forces of hunger and disease. Some of these results have come about through projects approved by the Governing Council and implemented during the fourth and earlier cycles. The application of technology has the potential for even greater accomplishments in the future. Although health and food problems are even more challenging now than in the past, today's technological tools - if applied in a responsive manner - are more sophisticated and have even greater potential to solve these problems.

18. A focus on research to alleviate hunger is justified. In spite of the unparalleled successes in increasing world food production during the past 30 years, the number of undernourished people continues to grow - from 460 million in 1969-1970 to 512 million in 1983-1985; more recent estimates suggest that this trend continues. The primary beneficiaries of increased and sustainable agricultural production are the poor in the developing countries who typically spend 60 per cent to 80 per cent of their incomes to purchase food for themselves and their families. If food sources cannot be affordable and accessible, the result will be an increase of misery and starvation for the poorest.

19. A focus on health research, especially that relating to children and women, is also justified. In spite of the significant progress of the past few decades, infant and child mortality rates remain unacceptably high in developing countries, especially in Africa. Likewise, maternal mortality and disability is 100 times greater in developing countries than in industrialized ones. While some modern health tools such as vaccines, drugs and delivery systems are available to stem these deaths and disabilities, many are not available for diseases that are not prevalent in developed countries. Furthermore, vaccines and drugs that can remain effective under developing country conditions are not yet available although the potential to create them at affordable prices is now known.

20. While the focus of the global programme in the fifth cycle will remain on health and food, the proposed activities will be different from those of the 1970s and even of the 1980s. UNDP will be presenting proposals to the Governing Council for the use of the global IPF during the fifth cycle that will take advantage of modern research tools to create new vaccines and drugs to reduce mortality and morbidity, but at an accelerated pace. In agriculture, the focus will be not only on increased yields, but also through systems that are environmentally sustainable. New partnerships among developing and industrialized countries will be forged to accelerate the pace of the research and to strengthen the developing country institutions. Annex 1 of document DP/INT/GLO/2/Corr.1 provides a proposed breakdown of global resources that are related to food (described under the heading "environment and natural resources") which total $61 million, including some $30 million in commitments already approved by the Council in 1989, 1990 and 1991. The amount within the global IPF directed to health research (under the heading "social development and poverty eradication") is set at $46 million. There is also an $8 million unprogrammed reserve, for a total of $115 million.

IV. GLOBAL FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH

21. Eight global projects are planned for submission to the Governing Council at its thirty-ninth session: five deal with research to enhance environmentally sound food production systems while three focus on research and development efforts to improve human health.

22. The world's attention has been called to two critical factors relating to food production in the developing countries. First, it is essential to meet the food needs of the 90 million new members of the world's population each year, most of whom are poor. Hunger must be minimized. Second, agricultural production systems must not contaminate the environment. They must protect the soil, water, air and other natural resources from contamination or destruction. These natural resources must be sustained so that food can be produced not only for today's generation, but for their children and grandchildren. UNDP's global agricultural research programme has a dual objective: (a) alleviation of hunger and (b) enhancing environmental quality.

23. Research relating to the environment and food will target innovative, non-chemical means of increasing food production. The main focus will be on the production of food for the poor coming from five crops (rice, maize, cassava, banana/plantain and potatoes) and from tilapia, a pond fish produced by resource-poor families. Increased yield potential for these crops will be

coupled with the plants' genetic abilities to withstand the onslaught of insect pests and diseases in production systems that minimize the use of chemical pesticides. Collaborating teams of scientists from international centres and from developing and developed countries will make use of modern biotechnology to provide farmers in developing countries with crop varieties that have built-in genetic resistance to pests. This resistance will be evaluated by farmers under field conditions through integrated pest management systems. Methods similar in concept to those used to improve crop varieties will be employed to increase the production capacity of tilapia, which is a source of affordable protein for rural and urban consumers and a commodity produced to a considerable extent by women. Strengthening the human and institutional capacities of the developing countries involved will be a high priority for each of these activities.

V. GLOBAL HEALTH RESEARCH

24. Global health research focuses on the development and use of improved technologies such as vaccines and drugs and on delivery systems for making these products affordable and available, especially to the poor. Advantage will be taken of two rapidly evolving areas of research. First is the revolution in biotechnology and genetic engineering that shows promise of developing vaccines and drugs far superior to those in the past. Second is an equally vital area of behavioural and operational research that helps in the creation of effective health care systems that meet the needs of the people.

25. During the fifth cycle, continued emphasis will be placed on disease problems that are most intense in low-income countries and that are especially devastating for women and children. Tropical diseases of little direct concern to industrialized countries will continue to receive high priority through research to develop new and improved drugs and vaccines. Basic researchers will be linked with drug and vaccine manufacturers and with health care delivery systems to expedite the field use of these new products. Similar intensified research will focus on the creation, testing and use of vaccines to combat diarrhoeal, respiratory and other diseases of children. Creative partnerships of scientists, engineers and practitioners from both developed and developing countries will work together to develop and put to use these critical health tools. Behavioural and operational scientists will join those concerned with biology and chemistry to bring modern health interventions closer to the people. Health problems associated with human reproduction will also receive attention. As has been the case in the past, strengthening the human and institutional capacities of cooperating developing countries will be emphasized.

VI. OTHER GLOBAL INITIATIVES

26. Other research initiatives are under consideration for support from the global programme. They include: research related to HIV/AIDS in association with the WHO Global Programme on AIDS; research to reduce the destruction of forests; and the possible extension of the locust control programme, initially endorsed by the Governing Council at its twenty-sixth session.

VII. INTERREGIONAL PROGRAMMES

27. The criteria noted in paragraph 5 above apply to the interregional programme, which has its focus on innovative, operational and service delivery efforts of importance to countries in more than one region. Improved products, networks or delivery systems created through research and development experience are put to work under practical field conditions. These projects commonly involve pilot or demonstration activities with broad policy or sectoral implications for the developing countries. They serve as linkages between global research and development efforts and the continuing innovative role in implementing these activities.

28. The collaborative partnerships that characterize the global programme also pertain to much of the interregional efforts. UNDP joins with other United Nations and external support agencies to co-sponsor or jointly support these activities. Such arrangements encourage innovative joint financing and management arrangements that involve resources far beyond those being provided by UNDP.

29. Documents DP/INT/GLO/2 and Add.1 describe the interregional activities under three headings:

(a) Social development and poverty alleviation. Strengthening human resources and institutional capacities in developing countries has a high priority in these development areas. Specific activities will be planned and implemented to promote education with special emphasis on women and children. Advantage will be taken of past experience in water supply and sanitation activities to enhance the capacities of communities and institutions to plan and manage their water resources. Continued emphasis will be placed on improving primary health care services and on increasing the institutional and human resources capacities to provide these services. Greater attention will be given to the impact of the HIV epidemic on economic and social development and to the community-based and intersectoral efforts that are needed to change human behaviour to stem the disastrous spread of the virus. Efforts will be made to develop a multi-donor partnership to curb the unacceptably high maternal mortality and disability rates in developing countries and to avoid or overcome disabilities. Collaboration with WHO and with NGOs will, in large part, characterize these activities;

(b) Environment and natural resources. These activities will focus on the complementarity between improving environmental quality and enhancing economic and social development. Again, human and institutional capacity-building in developing countries will be a primary objective. The focus will be on environment-oriented institutions and on sectors with activities involving environmental quality. Energy management and improvements in the efficiency of energy production and utilization in collaboration with the World Bank and institutions in developing countries will have high priority. Such measures will benefit both the users of the energy and those who are concerned with environmental issues. Similar joint concerns will dominate activities in forestry conservation and integrated water resources management, where special emphasis on community participation will be placed. Likewise, efforts in collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and agricultural

research centres to transfer environmentally sound integrated pest management systems to the field will receive attention. It is expected that additional activities financed through the Global Environment Facility will also fall under this heading;

(c) Public sector management. These activities will also give high priority to improving the capacity of human and institutional resources in the developing countries for improved management and administration. United Nations organizations, including the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCTAD), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) will be associated in these endeavours. Issues to receive attention will include increasing the capacity of developing countries to manage debt, multi-donor assistance to stimulate more effective trade policies, and support to overcoming problems in urban management. Attention will also be given to special training activities focused on micro-enterprises, public and private sector management, privatization and electoral reform.

30. The majority of the activities in the interregional programme were either not elements of the fourth cycle interregional programme or they were initiated during the course of the cycle. They respond to recommendations of international conferences (e.g., the World Conference on Education for All, the Global Consultation on Safe Water and Sanitation for the 1990s, the World Summit for Children), the economic and political transformations affecting many developing countries, the emergence of rapid urbanization, and other areas of human development where there are opportunities to promote international partnerships and mobilize financial resources beyond those contained in the interregional IPF. Like other inter-country programmes, interregional programmes are subject to approval by the Action Committee and most are interlinked with UNDP country and regional activities. Examples of such linkages are, among others, the UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Programme, the Urban Management Programme, support to the Uruguay Round of Negotiations, Advisory Services on Foreign Direct Investment and the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Operational Research programme.